

BAR BINGO

PURPOSE: To provide an overview of Bar BINGO program possibilities and probabilities while delivering some fun and variation into your program.

SCOPE: There are many different ways to structure BINGO games which are played in the bar or lounge of your operation. In many clubs, Bar BINGO is actually a misnomer because you don't even have to be in the "bar" to play it! Whatever your angle on Bar BINGO is, it is a good draw to your club and can be a good bottom line builder.

GENERAL: There are many different approaches to BINGO in the bar. There are structured games where a caller calls out the numbers, and there are games where the player plays sealed cards against pre-called numbers. However you play it, Bar BINGO can be a money maker and a crowd pleaser for your club.

GUIDANCE:

Who plays bar BINGO?

Bar BINGO will attract a far broader range of players than your regular BINGO program. People with idle time, those with a prospect of a quick win, those who enjoy BINGO but don't want to spend the time or the money your regular program involves and, of course, those who play your regular BINGO program.

What kind of equipment and supplies are needed?

For a called game, you can use anything from a portable ball hopper and PA system to your normal house BINGO system as long as it can be heard in all areas where your BINGO is played. The most important item is the card. Be sure to use "punch out" cards so your players don't need daubers. For pre-called, *continuous* games be sure to use sealed cards such as Bonanza or Quick Shot and have either daubers or markers available for your players use. For pre-called games, make sure the numbers and winning combinations are readily available to the players. You can do this in the form of video monitors, posters on the wall, table tents or flyers.

How are games controlled on the pre-called game?

Of course, BINGO must be controlled, but let's look at this realistically. We're generally talking about small payouts, free cards, \$2.00, \$5.00 etc.. Control the cards just like the cash equivalent. Control from the cashier function, and issue them in a standard pack size you are comfortable with. Each card seller should receive packs of cards with the shift bank, with documentation of issue on the AF Form 1875. From there, replacement becomes a cash transaction between

If you have a successful program, e-mail us at clubs@afsva5.afsv.af.mil and tell us about it!

cashier and seller. At \$1.00 a card, if you sell \$25, you take \$25 to the cage and buy 25 more. Each cashier is never responsible for more cards than were originally issued. For redemption of winning cards, the seller is empowered as your paying agent. The seller verifies the winning card, has the winner print their name and phone number on the top of the card and pays the prize from the bank. That card is now a voucher for the amount of the payout and is sold back to the cashier for cash at the end of the shift. The cashier maintains an AF Form 2046 for the day's recap of the program, listing total sales, total payouts etc.. The AF Form 2046 will also list the winning game pattern, the winners name and phone number, and have the winning card(s) attached.

How big should the prize(s) be, and where should the numbers start?

Prize amounts are dependent on the program and customer participation. Consider how quickly you can turn over the prize and still generate the profit you want, and what kind of consolation prize it will take to keep daily interest high during times when the jackpot numbers are low? For the pre-called games, BINGO King publishes a probability sheet that forecasts probable payouts. The sheet seems to be fairly close but there are no guarantees!

When should we play?

The pre-called game is easy. Play it all the time! Make cards available at lunch, dinner, in the lounge, and even at the cashier's window when nothing else is open. As for your called game, timing is everything! You will want to set your time to try and keep some of the "after work" folks a little longer. If you have a regular BINGO program, you also want bar BINGO timed to bring your regular players in a little early. So, if your program keeps some a little later and brings in others a little early, you are already achieving positive results.

Who can play / win?

This could be the single most important aspect of putting your program together. Be specific in your rules and cover all the possibilities. Will you require everyone who purchases a BINGO card to show a club card? Must you be a member to win? The nature of the continuous game makes this an important area that must be well defined. If you have nonmembers eating lunch in your club, can they play BINGO? You need to think about the restrictions before you sell your first card. You will definitely get questions. Think about employees too. They tend to support the pre-called games, so you need to decide if and when they can play, and which employees can't play.

Make the rules clear!

Take the time before you start your BINGO program to establish the rules of the game(s). Make sure they are available to both players and staff members. Cover all the areas that may be problems. Review your program periodically and revise your rules as required.

SUMMARY:

BINGO is one of our best revenue opportunities. There are many places around town where your members can play BINGO, but few that can offer the diversity possible in Air Force clubs. There is no textbook BINGO program that will work every time, everywhere. Keep your games current and talk to your players. They will let you know how you are doing.

If you have a successful program, e-mail us at clubs@afsva5.afsv.af.mil and tell us about it!